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SUBJECT: Socialist International Holds Second Council Meeting in the Dominican Republic

1.(U) SUMMARY: The Socialist International (SI) held its second Council meeting of the year in Santo Domingo on 11/23-24. The meeting, entitled "At a Turning Point for a Sustainable Future: The Social Democratic Way Forward," saw the delegates representing over 150 SI members adopt three declarations (climate change, democracy, and arms control and nuclear disarmament), as well as three resolutions (global development, human rights in Iran, and the Middle East). SI President, Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou called for greater participation of women in political processes as well as for tax revenues from developed countries to be used to help developing countries combat climate change. The meeting's host, opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) President Miguel Vargas Maldonado, was rewarded for his efforts by being elected as one of two SI Vice Presidents (the other being Sigmar Gabriel, head of Germany's SPD). END SUMMARY.

CLIMATE CHANGE

¶2. The Council adopted a declaration entitled "From a High-Carbon Economy to a Low-Carbon Society," which called for an international agreement on climate change between all parties during the conference of the Convention United Nations Framework on Climate Change in December 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Declaration states that the "principles of common and differentiated responsibility and respective capacity" should guide the Copenhagen discussions, that the agreement reached there should include absolute reductions for developed countries and objectives for the main developing countries, along with contributions for rapid financing and a "formula for the financing of mitigation and adaptation under a future regime." (NOTE: The SI resolution on Global Development, see below, however, does call for less developed states such as China and India to commit to reductions. END NOTE.)

DEMOCRACY

¶3. The Council's declaration on "Securing Democracy and Reaffirming People's Rights" could be interpreted as a commentary on the situation in Honduras because of its emphasis on free and

legitimate elections within the Rule of Law, along with its condemnation of "any disruption of democratic institutions."

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL

14. The Council's declaration on "Working for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons and for Arms Control" emphasized the SI's commitment to comprehensive global disarmament as well as the importance of holding a successful Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in May 2010. The Council welcomed the negotiations between President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry to cut the U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals, as well as President Obama's decision to cancel deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems in Poland and the Czech Republic. The Council also called on non-State Parties to sign on to the NPT and for all states to comply with its obligations. In addition, SI members "demanded" the development of nuclear-weapon-free-zones, "especially in areas of tension such as the Middle East," the establishment of zones free of all weapons of mass destruction, the continuation of the moratorium on nuclear testing, and the "urgent ratification" of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (the SI

welcomed President Obama's statement to seek such ratification). In addition, they called upon the Conference on Disarmament to quickly conclude a treaty on the production of fissile material for explosive devices and for all nuclear weapon states to commit to a no-first-use policy.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

15. The Council's resolution on "The Challenges of Global Development at the End of 2009 and the Perspectives for 2010 - The Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural Dimensions" called for sustainable global development, criticized "neoliberal policies and casino capitalism," and lauded the "social democratic approach of economic development, protection and social justice, and environmental protection. It echoed the SI's declaration on climate change in demanding the developed states, as the highest per capita emitters of greenhouse gases, "must agree on new and deeper targets for cutting emissions," but also affirmed that less developed states, "particularly China and India, must also commit to reductions, even if the targets are numerically lower." The Council expressed satisfaction at the establishment of the G-20, opining that it should replace the G-8 at the forum for developing a global economic framework, although the ideal, according to the Council would be a G-192, containing all of the world's countries. With respect to future policies, the SI encouraged China to use its "substantial savings" to increase domestic demand and improve its social security system. The SI further stated that China and India "must assume more responsibility for global economic development" as well as favored the creation of a new currency reserve adapted from proposals by China's Central Bank.

The SI cautioned against "premature" reductions in counter-cyclical stimulus packages and urged governments not to cut spending on social programs and infrastructure when they do adopt deficit reduction policies. In addition to these policies, the Council argued that the financial sector should be "made to bear the costs of the crisis through a global tax on capital gains" and even opposed continued bailouts and subsidies to that sector. The

Council also expressed concern that the purchase by more developed countries of agricultural land in less developed countries will "exacerbate the inequitable distribution of food resources." Finally, the SI welcomed the G-20 commitments to refrain from increased protectionist measures, called for the elimination of developed country subsidies for agricultural exports and for greater market access for developing country exports while also urging completion of the WTO Doha Round in 2010.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

¶6. In its "Resolution on Iran," the Council expressed concern over the denunciations of violations of human rights in Iran, condemned every practice that is contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, demanded respect for the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, including the Kurds, demanded freedom of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, and expressed its solidarity with those who, "in accordance with our values, struggle for democracy, progress and justice in Iran."

THE MIDDLE EAST

¶7. The Council, in its "Resolution on the Middle East," reaffirmed the SI's "conviction" that a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict includes the creation of a Palestinian State, and the recognition of Israel's right to "live in peace within internationally recognized borders." The resolution also calls for an end to the "Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territory occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem (which is indentified as the ideal capital of an independent, sovereign and viable democratic Palestinian state). The SI termed Israeli settlement activities in the Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, as "illegal," as a "gross violation of international law," as a major obstacle to peace," and as a violation of Israel's signed commitment not to undertake "any unilateral action liable to prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations," and called for Israel to halt them "at once." The Council called on all governments to "put an end" to the blockade of the Gaza strip, which it characterized as a "collective punishment," to support the efforts of the Palestinian government to build the economic and institutional foundations of a future state, and to reconstruct Gaza.

OTHER ISSUES

¶8. The Council sent a message of support to Aung Sang Suu Kyi (SI Special Honorary President), "deplored" the decision to hold elections in Honduras before the restoration of constitutional government there, sent its (prescient) "best wishes for success" to Uruguay's Frente Amplio presidential candidate Jose Mujica, and supported the request by the UN Special Committee on Decolonization for the UN General Assembly to consider the case of Puerto Rico.

COMMENT

[¶](#)9. Emboffs consulted PRD officials for their readout of the Council meeting, but were advised to just "read the declarations and resolutions." Domestically the major news coming out of the meeting was PRD leader Vargas Maldonado's election as one of the SI's two Vice Presidents. END COMMENT.
Lambert